

Brookline Preservation Commission

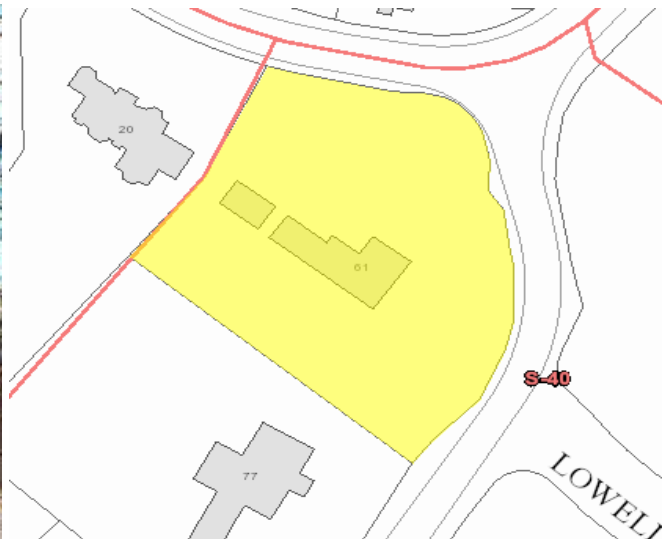
Demolition Application Report

Address: 61 Heath Street

Owner: William Holding

Building Type: House & Garage

National Register Listing (if Applicable): Individually Listed



Historical/Architectural Significance:

The house at 61 Heath Street began its life as a modest one-and-one-half story, side-gabled Greek Revival cottage but has undergone a series of alterations during its lifetime. The house sits on a brick foundation at some points and cement at others and rises one-and-one-half stories to an asphalt clad roof. All walls are clad in clapboard siding and windows are primarily multi-pane wood windows, although some replacement vinyl and decorative leaded glass windows are also present. Due to the age of many of the alterations, documentation is limited and staff was heavily reliant on cartographic and stylistic evidence. The core block maintains much of its period Greek Revival detailing, including its doorway with transom and sidelights sheltered by a pedimented porch, pilastered cornerboards, and gable-end returns. Sometime between 1855 and 1874, a rear ell was constructed and the Gothic Revival peaked dormers were likely added. Between 1919 and 1927, the rear ell was extended to meet the existing one-and-one half story carriage house and the bays were most likely infilled. In 1949, the door on the gable front elevation was replaced with a bay, and a dormer, which was enlarged in 1955, was installed on the rear slope of the roof of the main block. It is likely that the Colonial Revival pediments, dentils, and modillions were installed around this time to give the building a more modern appearance. The multi-acre lot that the house originally sat on was subdivided by the owner in 1992. Significant alterations without documentation include the construction of multiple dormers, the replacement of windows, the addition of the Colonial Revival pediments, dentils, and modillions, and the installation of an asphalt shingle roof. Although the house may be considered greatly altered, many of the most significant alterations now give us insight into the evolving needs and taste of each owner and have aged into significance themselves.

A frame outbuilding similar in massing to the garage is shown on maps of the site as early as 1879. The location of the outbuilding on the lot varies between atlases, however, there is no period of time when it is not present. No

permits for the construction of the garage building exist, however, building permits indicate that the garage was extended in 1932.

General Simon Elliot was born in Boston in 1762 and earned his military title through his service with the Continental Army. He was heir to one of the earliest and largest mill operations in Newton Upper Falls, which included four snuff mills, an annealing shop, a wire mill, a screw factory, and a blacksmith shop, a grist mill, and a fulling mill. He entered the family business at a young age, operating both the mill and a tobacco and snuff shop at 51 State Street alongside his father until his father's death in 1793. Elliot continued operations until 1814, when he sold the mill to his brother-in-law, Thomas H. Perkins.¹ Although he no longer had any claim to the land, he likely maintained a summer residence on the property until 1823, when Perkins demolished some and relocated many of the existing mill buildings, erected a large cotton mill on the site, and formed the Elliot Manufacturing Company.

According to Harriet Woods's 1874 *Historical Sketches of Brookline*, General Simon Elliot erected the oldest portion of the house on the site in 1824. Upon his passing in 1832, the property was inherited by Elliot's nephew, Simon Elliot Green. In 1840, Simon Elliot Green passed at the age of 48, leaving ownership to his widow, Elizabeth Tilden Linzee Green. She subsequently married James Sullivan Warren, who resided in the property until his death in 1867. According to Woods, Warren was admired for his "liberality", having donated a generous sum to beautify Brookline's Streets with shade trees. It is likely that Elizabeth remained in the property until her own death in 1896.

Circa 1900, the house was conveyed to George Cutler and Mary Wilson Cutler. George, an 1879 graduate of Harvard College, was employed in the lumber industry, while Mary was a homemaker. The couple raised five sons in the house, including Robert Cutler, the first National Security Advisor; Johnny Cutler, a noted Harvard quarterback; Roger Cutler, a U.S. Navy Officer and husband of Massachusetts politician Leslie Bradley Cutler; and their eldest son, Elliot Cutler, who inherited the property and resided in the house beginning in 1932. Dr. Elliot Cutler had illustrious military and medical careers, earning the titles of Brigadier General with the U.S. Army and Moseley Professor at Surgery at Harvard Medical School in his lifetime. He is perhaps best remembered for performing the first successful heart valve surgery. Dr. Cutler resided in the property until his death in 1947 at the age of 59, and his wife, Caroline, retained ownership of the property until 1949.

The property was then acquired by George Blake and Rosemary Shaw Blake in late 1949. George was listed as a manufacturer in 1950 and a consultant in 1960, while Rosemary was always listed as a homemaker. By 1960, the couple resided in the property with a nurse and housekeeper. The couple raised five children in the house, and Rosemary retained ownership of the property until her death in 2021 at the age of 103.

The house at 61 Heath Street meets the following criteria for an initial determination of significance:

- b. The building is listed on or is within an area listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places; is eligible for listing on the National or State Registers of historic places; or is a building for which a preliminary determination of eligibility has been made by the Massachusetts Historical Commission;
- c. The building is associated with one or more significant historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the Town or Commonwealth; and
- d. The building is historically or architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, method of construction, or its association with a significant architect or builder, either by itself or as part of a group of buildings.

¹ It is worth noting that General Simon Elliot partnered with Thomas Handasyd Perkins on several business ventures, including the construction of the Federal, Boston's first theater, during his lifetime. Perkins amassed his fortune through the slave and opium trades and continued to trade slaves illegally for years after the practice was outlawed. Perkins resided nearby at 450 Warren Street.

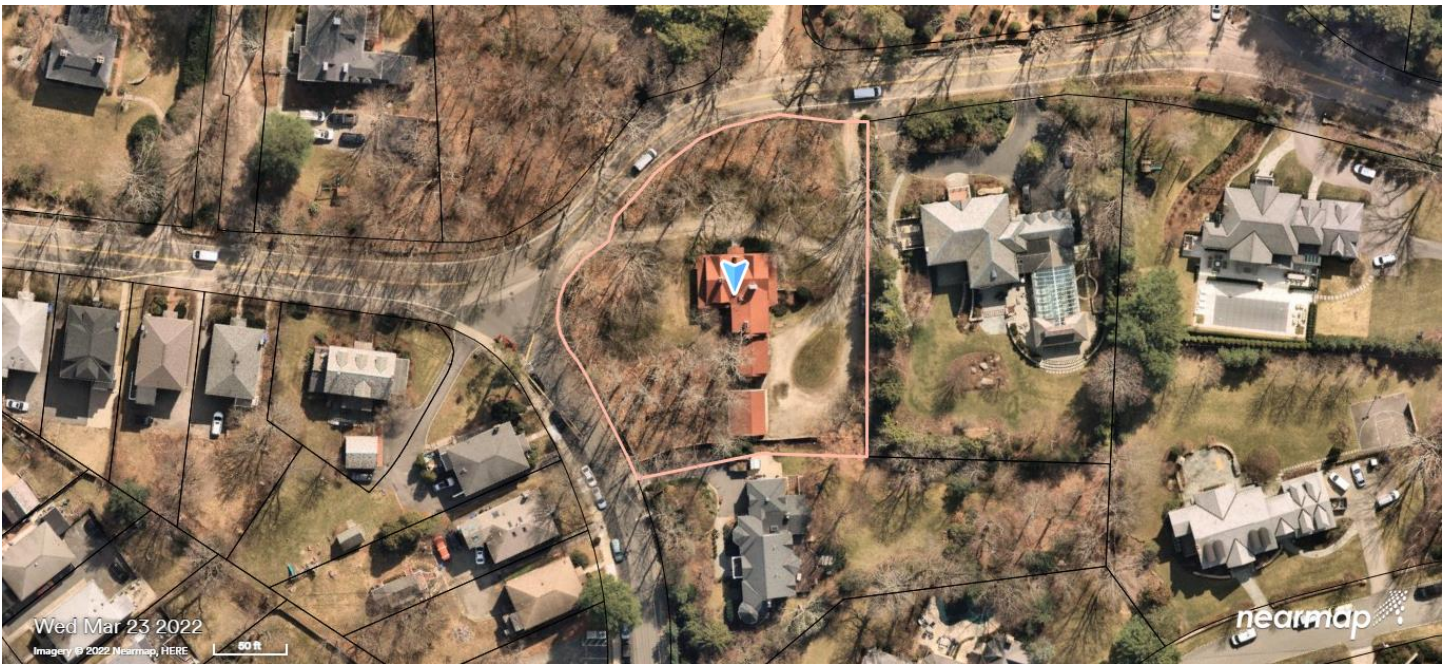
The house at 61 Heath Street retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.



Aerial view of the property, looking north.



Aerial view of the property, looking west.



Aerial view of the property, looking south.



Aerial view of the property, looking east.



Photo Key



Fig 1. View of the
façade of the
house, provided
by the applicant.



Fig 2. View of the
the north
elevation of the
house, provided
by the applicant.



Fig 3. Partial view of the south elevation of the house, provided by the applicant.



Fig 4. View of the south elevation of the house, provided by the applicant.



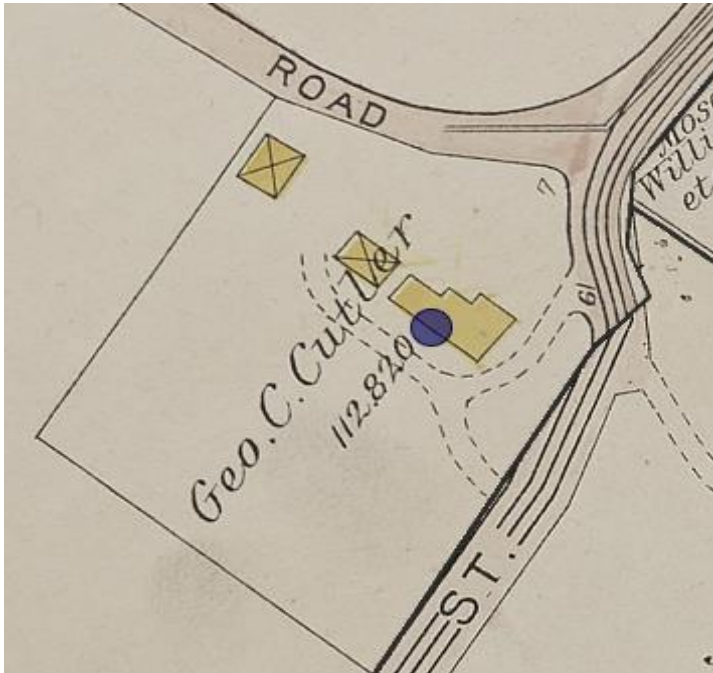
Fig 5. Photo of the façade of the garage, provided by the applicant.



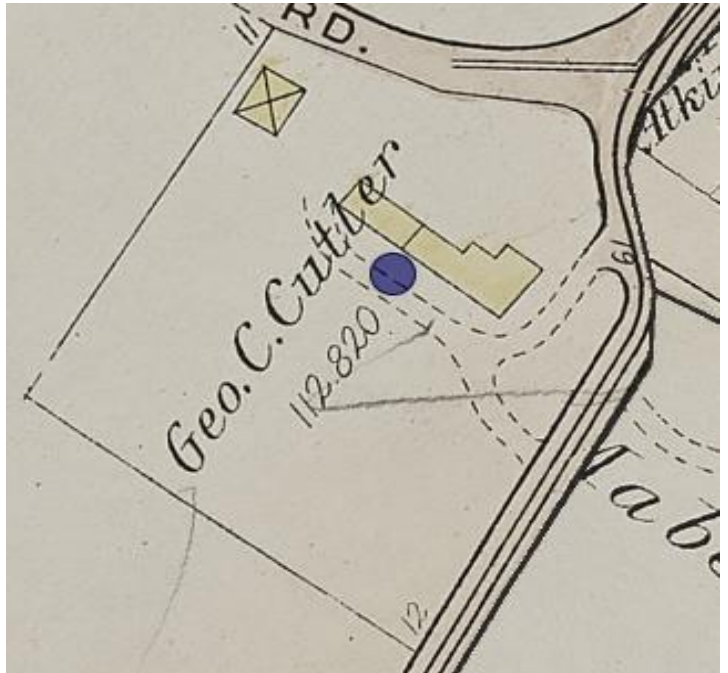
Property as shown on the 1855 *Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass.: Made by Order of the Town authorities from Actual Surveys*



Property as shown on the 1874 G.M. Hopkins & Co. *Atlas of the Town of Brookline Massachusetts*



Property as shown on the 1919 G.W. Bromley & Co. *Atlas of the Town of Brookline, Norfolk County, Massachusetts*



Property as shown on the 1927 G.W. Bromley & Co. *Atlas of the Town of Brookline, Norfolk County, Massachusetts*